



MOVE! *Dealing with...*

Stress, Anxiety, and Depression



Change Your Thinking Habits

1. Recognize that you are the **ONLY ONE** who can control your thoughts! Therefore, in every situation you always have a personal **CHOICE** to let yourself get upset or not to get upset. You make a **CHOICE** about **what to think** regarding any situation that happens.
2. If you find yourself beginning to get upset or stressed, look for your negative, exaggerated, over-reactive, unrealistic, and self- defeating thoughts about whatever is stressing you. Immediately recognize that these thoughts are in error, are making you feel stressed, and stop them! Then, **MAKE** yourself put sensible, realistic, or more positive thoughts in their place.
3. **EXAMPLES OF SENSIBLE, REALISTIC, AND/OR POSITIVE THOUGHTS:**
 - * “If I allow myself to get stressed out, I'm the one who suffers”.
 - * “Why should I waste my energy getting upset, - what difference will it make”?
 - * “I don't have to like everything that happens, I just have to get through it”.
 - * “I am going to keep my dignity right now instead of making a fool of myself by letting myself get upset”.
 - * “Nobody promised that life would be fair. That's not realistic”.
 - * “One little thing like this isn't going to make any difference in my life as a whole”.
 - * “I just have to deal with today, tomorrow can wait”.
 - * “I choose to live each day to its fullest and enjoy that day”.
 - * “I cannot control other people's behavior. I only have to worry about my own”.
 - * "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."

4. EXAMPLES OF CALMING THOUGHTS TO USE:

- * "I am calm and relaxed".
- * "I am at peace with myself and with the world around me".
- * "I will slow down my speech and all my physical actions".
- * "My arms and legs are heavy and warm".
- * "My heartbeat is calm and regular".
- * "My lungs are breathing quietly and freely".
- * "My mind is quiet and still".

5. Use your power of "mental rehearsal" to vividly picture yourself handling particular stressful situations calmly and effectively. Plan to carry these solutions out if possible.

6. Take charge of yourself!

7. Use your sense of humor. Laugh at yourself and at life.

8. Strive to be a positive person with a positive attitude!

Assist Your Body in Handling Stress

1. Do aerobic exercise 4-6 times each week. Make exercise an important and regular part of your day.
2. Eat a healthy diet which is low in fat and high in fiber. Limit salt and sugar as well to reasonable levels. You will feel better!
3. Get enough rest to avoid feeling tired or "run down".
4. Have someone give you a massage.
5. Take a hot shower or bath when feeling stressed.

Other Things to Escape or Counteract Stress

- 1. Escape from stressful situations. Leave, take a vacation. take a break, daydream, count to ten, take a deep breath, etc.**
- 2. Break big tasks into little ones, and tackle one at a time.**
- 3. Learn the relaxation response and practice it regularly. This can be learned through progressive muscle relaxation techniques, relaxation tapes, self hypnosis, meditation, biofeedback, etc.**
- 4. Arrange to have some quiet time for yourself each day. Go be somewhere free from any disruptive stimulation.**
- 5. Speak up and express yourself. Do not hold things inside yourself and let them eat at you. Be assertive, stand up for your personal rights. Be willing to say what you really think, believe, feel, need, or want. Talk your troubles over with someone you respect who will listen to you.**
- 6. Take the time to do things you enjoy. Have some fun, socialize, go fishing, and so on. Life is too short to not enjoy it!**
- 7. Decide what things are important to you in your life at this time. Be sure to distribute your time, money, and energy first to the things that are important.**
- 8. Plan ahead and pace yourself so you aren't late or in a terrible rush.**
- 9. Get started with things you have to do. Do not procrastinate and let things pile up on you.**
- 10. Write out what you are feeling. Write a letter to whoever you have bad feelings about. Don't mail it.**
- 11. Listen to music.**
- 12. Pray, if that helps you feel relief.**